

Time To Plant A Fylking Lawn



Yes, late summer or early fall is the best time to plant your Fylking lawn. This is the time of year when bluegrass establishes well. The soil is warm for quick sprouting (intensifying Fylking's naturally fast germination), the days are brim-full of nourishing sunlight, and seasonal growth of crabgrass and other competing weeds is nearing its end.

Seedbeds, after summer-long drying, are not gummy to work up. Outdoor chores are tailing off. Fylking and other improved bluegrasses, responding to shorter days, do not put on a lot of foliage that makes for mowing.

Although Fylking can be introduced into a tired lawn by scratching the surface with a scarifier (sometimes referred to as a "power rake"), a more perfect stand is usually obtained by sowing this twilight seed into a cultivated seedbed. Rotary till, disc or hand work the soil, mixing in five to ten pounds of good fertilizer for each thousand square feet (the actual amount will depend upon how poor the soil is, how rich the fertilizer).

Level, soak to settle (if the seedbed is fluffy), then rake leaving soil chunks about the

size of your finger tip at the surface (the Fylking seed will settle nicely among them, and be protected against quick drying out).

Two and one-half pounds of seed per thousand square feet is usually sufficient. Most recommendations call for two and one half or three pounds. The higher rate is a little easier to spread, and therefore some insurance against gaps in coverage. A lawnsed spreader is suggested for dispersing the seed uniformly, and you may want to sow half the seed one direction, half crosswise, as a double check against any skips.

Rolling after sowing is sometimes necessary although rain or watering will help settle the seed in the soil in the surface is chunky. You may want to rake the seedbed lightly to better imbed the seed if the soil is not sufficiently loose or its surface "pebbled."

NEXT COMES watering. With underground irrigation you are on easy street. But if you water with a hose and sprinkler, or especially if you must depend entirely upon nature, a mulch over the new

seeding will prove a tremendous aid. This prevents the rapid drying out of the surface soil after rain or watering, and encourages exuberant sprouting.

A loose covering of clean straw a few straws deep makes a traditional mulch, excellent, but hard to come by these days in the city. Urban garden centers do offer effective substitutes, however, ranging from mats of excelsior to woven nettings and fibrous blankets. Most mulches can be left in place because obscured as the Fylking gains stature. They'll decay, become one with the soil.

After the grass has made some headway, you may want to fertilize it again before freeze-up. Use a non-burning plant food, or wash the fertilizer off of the foliage immediately after it has been spread. Young grass can sometimes be damaged by fertilizer salts which adhere to the leaves.

With low-growing Fylking, mowing may not even be needed until spring; mow if the grass "seems to need it," i.e. reaches about double the customary height at which it will be kept. Fylking does well mowed about an inch tall.

Don't worry about weeds showing up in the new seeding. Most will be killed by cold weather, will not survive mowing, or will be squeezed out by the grass. Survivors can be wiped out next spring with the choice herbicides available these days. Or bromoxynil can be used to stop broadleaf weeds in young turf without harm to the grass seedlings, if applied according to directions while the broadleaves are still immature.

Turf And Tree Vie For Food

Battle is constantly being waged in your lawn, between grass and weeds, between turf and trees. The new bluegrasses, fescues, bentgrasses and perennial ryegrasses compete well with the weeds, crowd out most of them in time. The grasses don't necessarily fare as well competing with the more deeply rooted shrubs and trees.

In most cases it is not the shade of a tree that is critical to grass survival. Trees on the lawn are usually widely enough spaced, and the crowns sufficiently high, to allow a good bit of filtered sunlight.

Bluegrasses, and especially fine fescues, can survive with a relatively small percentage of daylight. Dim light can be partly offset by mowing the grass tall, so that as much green leaf as possible is retained by the grass for trapping energy.

More telling on survival, as a rule, is the competition for water and fertilizer. Under trees and where shrub roots

extend into the lawn, more frequent feeding and irrigation is needed to satisfy the wants of both turf and tree.

A trick in such locations is to use a slow-release fertilizer, that parcels out nutrients at a steady pace. Ureafertil is tailored for just such purposes.

A lawn fertilizer containing ureafertil will release about one third of its nitrogen within the first two or three weeks after application; the remainder will become available to plants during succeeding weeks and months. Ureafertil must be acted upon by soil microbes to become soluble.

Thus, because activity of the soil bugs relates to temperature, slow-release fertilizers are somewhat more rapid in summer than during cooler seasons.

A major ureafertil manufacturer estimates that 25 per cent of the nitrogen becomes available the year of application, 25 per cent the season following, and 10 per cent in a subsequent year.

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Sweet Corn Is Safe

With all the talk about corn blight going around, sweet corn lovers may be wondering whether they should worry about the disease.

"Enjoy sweet corn to your heart's content," says Maryann McGum, Michigan State University food marketing information agent. "The disease is not likely to be a problem with sweet corn at all because these ears are picked before the seed has had time to mature," she explains. Corn blight is more of a problem for the field type of corn raised for seed and as an animal feed. Many corn producing areas of the country are experiencing some problems with corn blight but the extent is not yet known. Michigan's sweet corn supply is expected to be about 22 per cent less than last year. Still the supply appears to be ample and prices very moderate.

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